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54 Built liquid detergent compositions and method of preparation.

57 A stable homogeneous aqueous liquid detergent composition contains 22 to 35% by weight of sodium triphosphate and 6 to 15% by weight of an active detergent mixture comprising a) a water-soluble anionic sulphate or sulphate detergent; b) an alkali metal soap of fatty acids having 12 to 18 carbon atoms, and c) a nonionic detergent, in a weight ratio of (5.5-8.5) : (0.5-3) : (1.5-3).

The composition is a pourable liquid having a viscosity of 0.35-1.0 Pa s measured at 20°C and at 21 seconds⁻¹ shear rate and remaining stable after at least two 24-hour cycles of from -4°C to ambient temperature.

Preferably the composition is prepared by mixing the ingredients in the proper sequence.

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BUILT LIQUID DETERGENT COMPOSITIONS AND METHOD OF PREPARATION

This invention relates to built liquid detergent compositions and to processes for preparing such compositions. More particularly the invention relates to aqueous liquid detergent compositions comprising high levels of sodium triphosphate, especially adapted
5 for washing fabrics, manually and in the washing machine.

Liquid detergent compositions comprising sodium triphosphate are known in the art, e.g. from French Patent Applications publication Nos 2247534; 2309629; 2390497 and 2343806; German Patent
10 Application 2819975; and US Patent Specifications Nos 2232878 and 4057506. However the formulation of adequately built liquid compositions having a satisfactory laundering performance is limited not only by stability problems but also by certain viscosity
15 boundaries as required for convenient dosing and handling both manually and in the machine. An acceptable and most convenient viscosity range for pourable liquid detergent compositions is from 0.35 to 1.0 Pascal seconds (\approx 350-1000 cP), preferably from about 0.5 to 0.8 Pascal seconds (\approx 500-800 cP).

20 Whereas for a satisfactory laundering performance comparable to that of conventional detergent powder compositions liquid detergent compositions should contain an adequate level of detergent active materials and builders equivalent to at least 22% by weight of sodium triphosphate, it has not been possible
25 hitherto to formulate a really stable liquid detergent composition having a viscosity of below 1.0 Pascal seconds with more than 20% by weight of sodium triphosphate. As 15% is about the maximum level to which sodium triphosphate can be dissolved in an aqueous liquid medium, any quantity of added sodium triphosphate beyond said level must be kept in suspension. The greater
30 the amount, the more difficult it is to control the viscosity and to keep the sodium triphosphate in stable suspension in the liquid medium.

It has now been found that really stable and pourable homogeneous liquid detergent compositions can be prepared containing from 22 to about 35% by weight of sodium triphosphate with a viscosity of between 0.35 and 1.0 Pascal seconds (Pa s) measured at 20°C and at a shear rate of 21 seconds⁻¹.

The liquid detergent compositions of the invention, because of the well-balanced active detergent mixture, are capable of keeping sodium triphosphate and any particulate matter in a stable homogeneous suspension whilst maintaining their liquid properties within the desired viscosity range. Under ambient conditions the liquid detergent compositions of the invention remain stable for months without any sign of separation.

A suitable means for measuring liquid stability is the so-called freeze-thaw stability test. The composition of the invention remains stable after at least two 24-hour cycles of from -4°C to ambient temperature.

Accordingly the present invention provides a novel homogeneous aqueous liquid detergent composition containing 22 to 35% by weight of sodium triphosphate and 6 to 15% by weight of an active detergent mixture comprising

- (a) a water-soluble anionic sulphonate or sulphate detergent;
- (b) an alkali metal soap of fatty acids having 12 to 18 carbon atoms; and
- (c) a nonionic detergent;

which is characterised in that the weight ratio of (a):(b):(c) is within the range of (5.5-8.5)-(0.5-3):(1.5-3) and that the composition is a pourable liquid having a viscosity of 0.35 to 1.0 Pa s measured at 20°C and at 21 seconds⁻¹ shear rate, and remaining stable after at least two 24-hour cycles of from -4°C to ambient temperature.

The water-soluble anionic sulphonate detergents usable in the composition of the invention are for example the alkali metal salts

of C_{10} - C_{16} alkylbenzene sulphonates, C_{10} - C_{20} alkane sulphonates, and C_{10} - C_{20} olefin sulphonates, the alkali metal salts of alkylbenzene sulphonates being preferred, especially those derived from alkylbenzenes having a C_{10} - C_{14} alkyl chain and average molecular weight of approximately 225-245.

The water-soluble anionic sulphate detergents usable in the composition of the invention are primary and secondary alkyl sulphates and alkylether sulphates having an alkyl chain length of about
10 8 to 20 carbon atoms, preferably 12 to 18 carbon atoms e.g. lauryl sulphate.

Typical examples of fatty acids having 12 to 18 carbon atoms are
15 oleic acid, ricinoleic acid, and fatty acids derived from castor oil, rapeseed oil, groundnut oil, coconut oil, palmkernel oil or mixtures thereof. The sodium or potassium soaps of these acids can be used, the potassium soaps being preferred.

Suitable nonionic detergents for use in the present invention may
20 be found in the following classes: fatty acid alkylolamides; alkylene oxide condensates of alkyl phenols or aliphatic alcohols, alkylamines, fatty acid alkylolamides and alkyl mercaptans; and amine oxides. Ethylene oxide condensates and mixtures of ethylene
oxide condensates with fatty acid alkylolamides are preferred.

25 Particularly suitable ethylene oxide condensates have hydrophylic-lipophylic balance (HLB) values of between 11 and 15, such as C_{13} - C_{15} alcohols condensed with 6-8 ethylene oxides.

30 Preferably the composition of the invention has a viscosity of from 0.5 to 0.8 Pa s measured at 20°C and at a shear rate of 21 seconds⁻¹; a sodium triphosphate content of 25 to 32% by weight and an active detergent mixture content of 8 to 14%
by weight.

35 While it is necessary to have the above detergent active mixture

in the specified ratios in the aqueous compositions in order to achieve a stable product within the desired viscosity range, it has been found that it is also important to mix the ingredients properly agitated in the proper sequence in order to produce a product of uniform quality from batch to batch. If the mixing sequence and proper agitation disclosed below are not followed, varying rheological properties and reduced suspending capability can occur. If the mixing order and proper agitation as described below are followed, then successive batches especially when mixed in the same vessel will produce products of uniform viscosity and stability.

The ingredients are preferably mixed in the following manner.

The quantity of water is charged into a suitable mixing vessel provided with a stirrer. Anionic detergents, including soap, are then mixed into the water with moderate stirring. Desirably slight heating to about 70°C is applied to dissolve the anionic detergents completely in the water.

The sodium triphosphate is then mixed into the aqueous anionic detergent solution with continued stirring whilst maintaining the temperature at the appropriate level of about 70-75°C until a homogeneous mass is obtained.

The nonionic detergent is then mixed into the mass and stirring is continued.

Finally the mixture is cooled under constant agitation and water is added, if necessary, to compensate evaporation loss during the first stages of operation. Thereafter perfume may be added when the product is at substantially ambient temperature.

The liquid detergent composition of the invention may further contain any of the adjuncts normally used in fabric washing detergent compositions e.g. sequestering agents such as ethylenediaminetetraacetate; alkali silicates for adjusting the pH;

soil suspending and anti-redeposition agents such as sodium carboxymethylcellulose, polyvinylpyrrolidone etc; fluorescent agents; perfumes, germicides and colourants.

5 Further the addition of lather depressors such as silicones; and enzymes, particularly proteolytic and amylolytic enzymes; and peroxygen or chlorine bleaches, such as sodium perborate and potassium dichlorocyanurate, including bleach activators, such as N,N,N',N'-tetraacetylenediamine, may be necessary to.
10 formulate a complete heavy duty detergent composition suitable for use in washing machine operations. These ingredients can be employed in the liquid detergent composition of the invention without danger of undue decomposition during storage if a proper protective coating is applied.

15 The presence of such additional solid particles will not affect substantially the viscosity and stability of the liquid detergent composition of the invention.

20 Example 1

A 4 kg batch of an aqueous liquid detergent composition was prepared: 705 grams of water were charged into a 5 liter vessel provided with a stirrer. The appropriate amounts of sodium silicate, sodium carboxymethylcellulose, sodium-alkylbenzene sulphonate,
25 potassium oleate and fluorescent agent, all in aqueous solutions, were successively introduced and mixed into the water with moderate stirring under slight heating until the temperature reached about 60-70°C. Heating was stopped and 1080 grams of sodium triphosphate was mixed into the aqueous solution with continued
30 stirring until a homogeneous mass was obtained. Thereafter the appropriate amounts of alcoholethoxylate and ethanolamide nonionics were mixed into the mass. The mixture was then allowed to cool under constant agitation and thereafter additional water and perfume were added.

35 A stable, white opaque, homogeneous and pourable liquid detergent of the following composition was obtained:

	<u>Composition</u>	<u>1 (% by weight)</u>
	sodium C ₁₂ -alkylbenzene sulphonate	6.5
	potassium oleate	1.6
	C ₁₃ -C ₁₅ alcohol/7 ethylene oxide	1.3
5	coconut monoethanolamide	1.4
	sodium carboxymethylcellulose	0.05
	sodium triphosphate	27.0
	sodium silicate	2.0
	fluorescent agent	0.1
10	water + perfume	up to 100.0
	viscosity (20°C; 21 seconds ⁻¹ shear rate)	0.5 Pa s
	pH (5 g/liter solution)	8.5

15 This composition was stored in transparent plastic bottles under ambient conditions and remained stable after two months. When subjected to a freeze-thaw stability test the composition remained stable after four 24-hour cycles of from -4°C to ambient temperature with no sign of separation being observed.

20 Examples 2-4

The following stable, white opaque, homogeneous and pourable liquid detergent compositions were prepared:

	<u>Composition (% by weight)</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
25	sodium C ₁₂ -alkylbenzene sulphonate	5	6.5	8.4
	potassium oleate	1.25	1.6	2.1
	C ₁₃ -15 alcohol/7 ethylene oxide	1	1.3	1.75
	coconut fatty acid monoethanolamide	1	1.4	1.75
	sodium carboxymethylcellulose	0.1	0.05	0.05
30	sodium triphosphate	27.0	30.0	27.0
	sodium silicate	-	2.0	2.0
	fluorescent agent	0.1	0.1	0.1
	perfume	0.4	0.4	0.4
	water up to	100	100	100
35	viscosity at 21 sec ⁻¹ shear rate	0.5 Pa s	0.66 Pa s	0.68 Pa s
	pH (5 g/liter solution)	7.5	8.5	8.5

The compositions were subjected to freeze-thaw stability tests and remained stable after four 24-hour cycles of from -4°C to ambient temperature with no sign of separation being observed. The compositions remained stable after at least 2 months storage under ambient conditions. No change in physical appearance or viscosity was observed.

Example 5

The following stable, white opaque, homogeneous and pourable heavy duty liquid detergent composition was prepared:

<u>Composition</u>	<u>(% by weight)</u>
sodium C_{12} -alkylbenzene sulphonate	6.4
potassium groundnut fatty acid soap	1.5
15 C_{13-15} alcohol/7 ethylene oxide	2.0
sodium carboxymethylcellulose	0.2
sodium triphosphate	25.0
magnesium ethylenediaminetetraacetate	0.5
fluorescent agent	0.1
20 encapsulated chlorine bleach	5.0
encapsulated proteolytic enzyme + silicone	1.0
sodium metasilicate	2.0
water + perfume	56.3
viscosity (at 21 sec.^{-1} shear rate and 10°C)	0.55 Pa s
25 pH (5 g/liter solution)	8.5

The composition remained stable after two 24-hour cycles of from -4°C to ambient temperature with no sign of separation.

30 The composition performed excellently in a fabric washing machine test at medium temperatures in terms of lather, bleaching and cleaning.

C L A I M S

1. A homogeneous aqueous liquid detergent composition containing 22 to 35% by weight of sodium triphosphate and 6 to 15% by weight of an active detergent mixture comprising
 - a) a water-soluble anionic sulphonate or sulphate detergent;
 - 5 b) an alkali metal soap of fatty acids having 12 to 18 carbon atoms; and
 - c) a nonionic detergent,characterised in that the weight ratio of (a):(b):(c) is within the range of (5.5-8.5):(0.5-3):(1.5-3) and that the composition
10 is a pourable liquid having a viscosity of 0.35 to 1.0 Pa s at 20°C and 21 seconds⁻¹ shear rate, and remaining stable after at least two 24-hour cycles of from -4°C to ambient temperature.
2. A liquid detergent composition according to claim 1,
15 characterised in that the viscosity is 0.5 to 0.8 Pa s.
3. A liquid detergent composition according to claim 1, characterised in that component (a) is a C₁₀-C₁₄ alkylbenzene sulphonate derived from alkylbenzenes having an average molecular
20 weight of 225-245.
4. A liquid detergent composition according to claim 1, characterised in that component (b) is a potassium soap.
- 25 5. A liquid detergent composition according to claim 1, characterised in that component (c) is selected from the group consisting of ethylene oxide condensates and fatty acid alkylol-amides and mixtures thereof.
- 30 6. A liquid detergent composition according to claim 5, characterised in that the ethylene oxide condensate has an HLB value of between 11 and 15.

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.)	
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim		
	<u>US - A - 3 684 723</u> (P. BEST et al.) * claim 1; column 3, lines 9 to 55; column 4, example 1 *	1,5	C 11 D	1/83 3/06 17/00
	-- <u>DE - A1 - 2 743 910</u> (STAUFFER CHEMICAL CO.) * claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 8; page 9, paragraphs 2, 3; page 12, example 1 *	1,5		
D	-- <u>DE - A1 - 2 819 975</u> (COLGATE-PALMOLIVE)		TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.)	
D	-- <u>US - A - 4 057 506</u> (ST. L. SUNG)		C 11 D	1/00 3/00 17/00
D	-- <u>FR - A1 - 2 309 629</u> (UNILEVER N.V.)			
A	-- <u>GB - A - 1 530 799</u> (UNILEVER LTD.)			
			CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS	
			X: particularly relevant A: technological background O: non-written disclosure P: intermediate document T: theory or principle underlying the invention E: conflicting application D: document cited in the application L: citation for other reasons	
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			&: member of the same patent family. corresponding document	
Place of search Berlin		Date of completion of the search 01-06-1981	Examiner SCHULTZE	